

Region 2

2005 Hurricane Response Lessons Learned

"DO THE RIGHT THING"



WATER VAPOR 8 km

NOAA

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2005 Lessons Learned

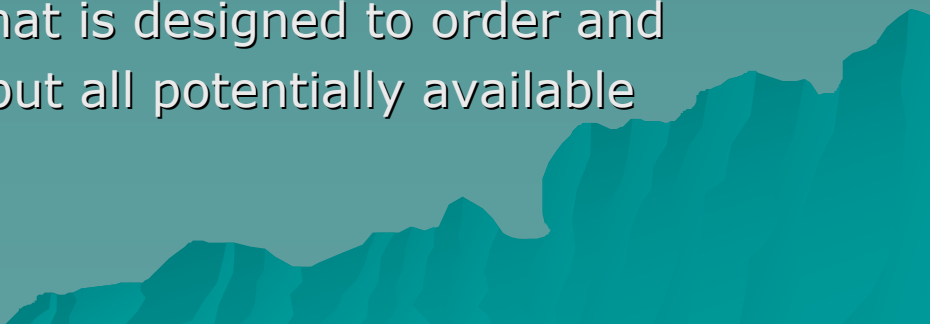
**Lessons Learned
divided into the
following topics**

- ◆ Pre-Planning
- ◆ Defining the Mission
- ◆ Logistics
- ◆ Finance
- ◆ Planning
- ◆ Operations
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Liaison
- ◆ Incident Command
- ◆ Regional Command

Pre-Planning

- ✓ Develop an on-call All-Risk Team for each region. The team can be capable of responding to fires, floods ,hurricanes, VIP visits, special events etc. Utilize fire, law enforcement, maintenance and management personnel. Train together twice a year. Train other employees in ICS. Strategically cache equipment.
- ✓ Train all employees in the Incident Command System and develop an “All-risk responder” training on what to expect, what gear is needed and how the system works.
- ✓ Strengthen your ties with local law enforcement and fire personnel; they are your link to the community. Especially the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- ✓ Prepare disaster response plans with the following information:
 - Maps and GPS coordinates of facilities/homes
 - Alternate food/medical/fuel sources
 - Locations for ICP/Camps/Heli-spots
 - Names and Contact numbers (cell phones)

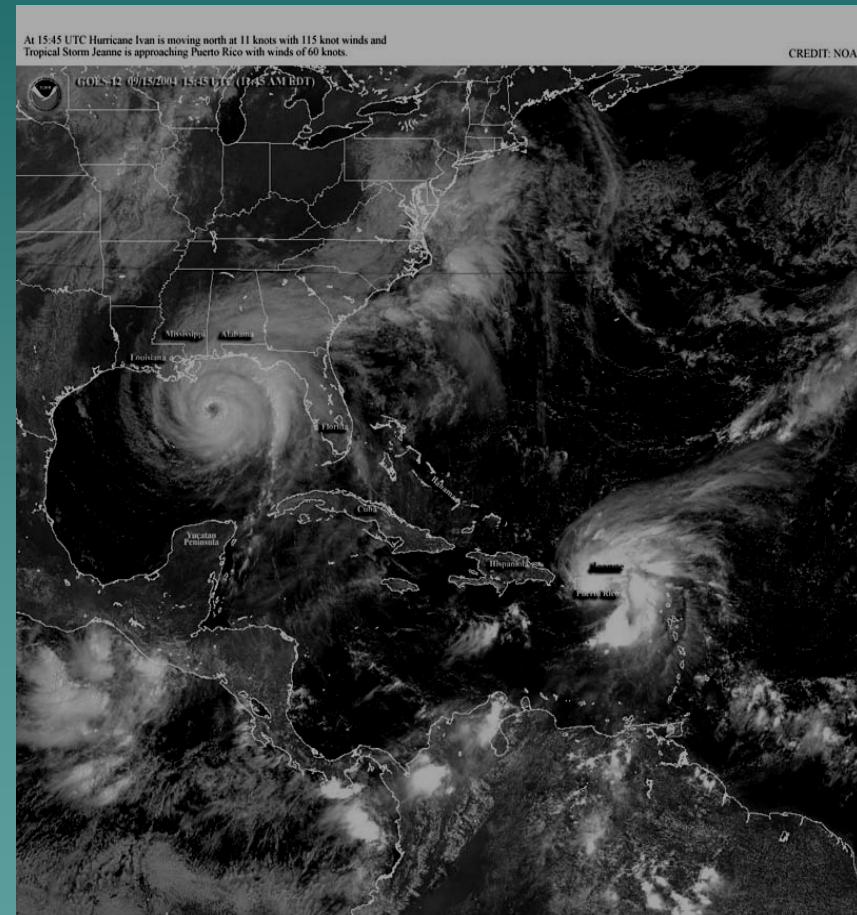
Pre-Planning

- ✓ Plan for the worst-case scenario, consider 2005 a warm-up.
 - ✓ Evacuate non-essential staff as early as possible (up to 4-5 days).
 - ✓ Establish the Hurricane Desk 4-5 days prior to the event to help coordinate evacuations and pre-planning.
 - ✓ A professional Incident Stress Debriefing Team available as needed.
 - ✓ The Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) is the only national database in operation that is designed to order and track resources. FMOs should input all potentially available resources into ROSS.
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- A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Defining The Mission

The Objectives for Hurricane Rita:

1. Assist with accounting for all FWS personnel in affected area
2. Community assistance
 - Protect human life and safety
 - Provide for the delivery of emergency services to public (access)
3. Activities that allow/assist FWS stations to get back on line (stabilize facilities to prevent further deterioration)
4. General cleanup of FWS stations



Defining The Mission

Is this our mission?

Or this?

“Hey, I
didn’t
sign up
for Haz-
Mat
work.”



Defining The Mission

- ✓ Commander's Intent: The Delegating Authority must be clear and concise on his/her expectations for the mission, including cost, timeframes and overall scope of the mission.
- ✓ Commander's Intent: Create realistic and attainable objectives. The Incident Commander needs the authority and flexibility to make decisions in the field and develop incident based objectives.
- ✓ Avoid mission creep by sticking to your objectives.

Lesson Learned:

"When in doubt, Do the Right Thing."

A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Logistics

- ◆ Emergency response trailers (cache trailers) are invaluable; build more, pre-position for fires, floods or any type of incident.
- ◆ Travel trailers provide temporary living quarters and ICP facilities; bring more.
- ◆ Satellite phones are not 100 percent reliable. Operations should not be based on consistent communications. A Communications Technician should be part of the response team.



Logistics

- ◆ Bring in a fuel source from outside the affected area; either contract or agency fuel tender.
- ◆ An agency service truck with a qualified Equipment Manager should be part of the initial response team.



- ◆ Build the plan around your logistical capability not the logistics around your plan. Traditional approaches to the planning process may not work during disasters.

Lesson Learned:

"Amateurs talk tactics, professionals talk logistics".

Finance



- ◆ The Buying Team concept worked well; assign a member as part of the initial response group or co-locate the buying team with the IMT when feasible.
- ◆ A high warrant authority is needed; higher the better.
- ◆ Pre-approve purchases (\$2,500) by Regional Office so Buying Team can operate more quickly.
- ◆ Cash purchases may be necessary if electricity/phone lines are down for a long-period of time; be prepared.

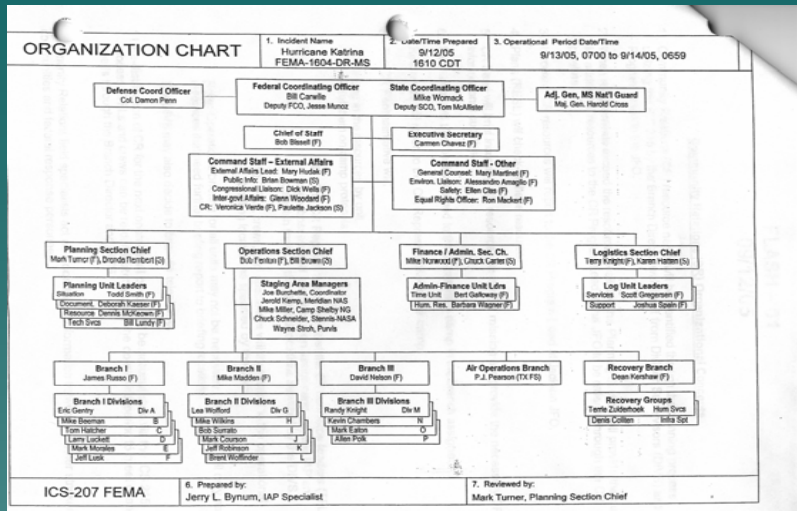
Finance

- ◆ Finance Section Chief or a minimum of a Cost Unit Leader, is a critical position.
- ◆ The Fire Time Report and Crew Time Report support emergency operations well; make them a standard.
- ◆ Unique AD positions (i.e. electrician) must be approved by Boise.
- ◆ When do you ask FEMA for funding? When you are ready to do their bidding.



Lesson Learned:
“Know your daily cost,
know your cost to date”

Planning



- ✓ Implement a single ordering system; Use ROSS.
- ✓ Equipment and Operators are assigned to the incident until released; ICS and incident training for all employees.
- ✓ A minimum of a Resource Unit Leader is necessary to track team resources, an entire Planning Section may need to be activated on a large incident; train our folks.
- ✓ Drive to the incident in an emergency vehicle (red lights) or in a well-marked agency vehicle.
- ✓ Have a federal ID.
- ✓ Link into the State EOC, Area Command and adjoining IMTs to develop a resource sharing capability.
- ✓ GPS units with mapping software proved invaluable (road signs blow away).

Lesson Learned:
"Failing to plan is planning to fail"

Operations

- ◆ Utilize agency aircraft for pre-deployment recon.
- ◆ Resources that can multi-task are mission essential.
- ◆ Establish Branches for each County/EOC within the team's area of operations. Branch or Liaison to attend meetings.
- ◆ Locals are invaluable; utilize local refuge employees as "tactical Liaisons".
- ◆ Establish a Facilities Group with technical specialists such as electricians, plumbers etc.
- ◆ Utilize AD employees to fill technical positions.
- ◆ Stage resources at strategic locations and/or approach the incident from multiple directions. Keep heavy equipment at staging areas until needed and then provide LE escort.



Operations

- ◆ Boats with skilled operators as part of initial response group.
- ◆ Rubber-tired equipment (skid-steers especially) on bumper-mounted trailers is ideal for the initial deployment. Avoid over-sized loads.



- ◆ Integrate Law Enforcement into the Operations Section at the Group or Branch level.

*Lesson Learned:
"Avoid mission creep by sticking to the objectives and learning to say NO."*

Information

- ◆ Information Officer is a critical position on the incident. A fully-qualified, agency employee is required; train our folks.
- ◆ Plan ahead; establish local media contacts prior to deployment.
- ◆ The Information Officer (IO) should focus on the external customer.
- ◆ Capture community assistance efforts on video; find the national media, sell the story.
- ◆ Use refuge biologists as technical specialists during media events.

Lesson Learned:

"Market the product"

Safety



We are asking our employees to enter a dangerous and complex environment; provide a Occupational Health and Safety Officer that is knowledgeable and field capable.



Disease, electricity, mold, bugs, snakes, criminals, looters, flying debris, stress-fractured trees, collapsing buildings, heat, humidity, dehydration, storms, tornadoes, sewage, poison ivy, flooding, driving, fires, another hurricane...

Lesson Learned:

"The Primary Objective is always Employee and Public safety. Base all actions on this one objective."

Liaison Officer

- ◆ The Liaison Officer is a critical position. Include one lead and possibly several assistants. Consider using Liaison Officers or Agency Representatives to gather intelligence and coordinate with local Government, Law Enforcement and Fire agencies (this may be an Ops function).
- ◆ If the ICP is co-located on a Refuge, the Liaison Officer will function as the go-between for the Manager and the IC. If multiple Refuges are in play consider additional Liaisons.
- ◆ Liaison or Branch Director can represent the Team at EOC planning meetings as needed. Consider a dedicated Liaison for the State EOC meeting.
- ◆ Personnel who are not familiar with the Liaison's function may struggle in that role. Find the right person to fit the job. The Liaison is an extension of the IC and often the sole link to non-IMT decision makers.

Incident Command

- The Delegation of Authority must be clear and specific but allow the IC flexibility. Conduct a face to face in-briefing when possible.
- Develop realistic objectives based on the Delegation of Authority and Agency Administrator's expectations.
- Appoint a fully-qualified Deputy. Get out in the field. Meet your cooperators. Smile. See the work that is getting done.



Lesson Learned:

"The commander's intent must be clear and consistent"

Incident Command

- ◆ Open communications with the delegating official are crucial; maintain them at all costs.
- ◆ Work with, not for, the local Refuge Managers.
- ◆ Minimize the involvement of the local Refuge Manager(s). The IC manages the incident, the manager manages the refuge.
- ◆ Be prepared for the psychological impact of hurricanes and all-risk assignments. It is not business as usual.
- ◆ Stay alert, think clearly, keep calm, act decisively. When in doubt, do the right thing.



Regional Command

- ◆ Prepare a clear and realistic Delegation of Authority.
- ◆ Ensure the incident objectives are in-line with your expectations.
- ◆ Choose your IC carefully. Allow the IC to build the team they need.
- ◆ Cost Containment will always be an objective, so regional office oversight will be required and not perhaps welcomed by the IC.
- ◆ Not all program areas were as prepared for tracking employees and should institutionalize pre-hurricane season preparedness meetings so all employees become aware of the notification process and the role of the hurricane desk.
- ◆ The role of LE needs to be made clear to the IC and the LE officers so a common vision can be shared.

Lessons Learned

Key Points

- Plan for the worst-case. Train for the worst-case.
- Every assignment is unique; be flexible.
- Create a team that can manage any incident; a team that is an extension of your authority.
- Train our people in ICS and Incident Management; we have the best and most versatile employees in the federal government.
- Use ICS; it works. Use ROSS; it works.
- Take two of everything and then add more fuel, more MREs and more water.
- Commander's Intent: The Delegation and the Objectives will keep you focused; get them right the first time.
- When in doubt; DO THE RIGHT THING

Hurricane Rita
September 24, 2005

2006 Hurricane Action Items

ACTION ITEM	LEVEL	WHO?
Create Regional Hurricane Response Plan	RO	Dave
Establish ALL-Risk Team/Identify non-fire personnel to support All-Risk response	RO/Field	
Critical Positions include: Liaisons, Finance, Logistics, Equipment Manager, Information Officer, Occupational Health/Safety Officer. Identify and forward names to RO	RO/Field	
Conduct ICS training as requested	RO	Curtis
Build Response Trailers	RO/Field	AZ Dist/???
Identify Fuel Trailer (s): contract or agency	Field	
Update Refuge Hurricane Response Plans (<i>GPS facilities, employee phone numbers, local cooperators, potential camps, Helispots etc</i>)	Field	FMOs
Establish a dialogue with local EOC (<i>let them know our capabilities</i>)	Field	FMOs
Input non-fire employees/equipment into ROSS and show them UNAVAILABLE	Field	FMOs
Integrate LE Operations with Fire	RO	
Brief Project Leaders on Response Plan	RO/Field	FMOs
Pre-hurricane Meetings to discuss above topics	RO/Field	
Research satellite communication tools	RO/Field	